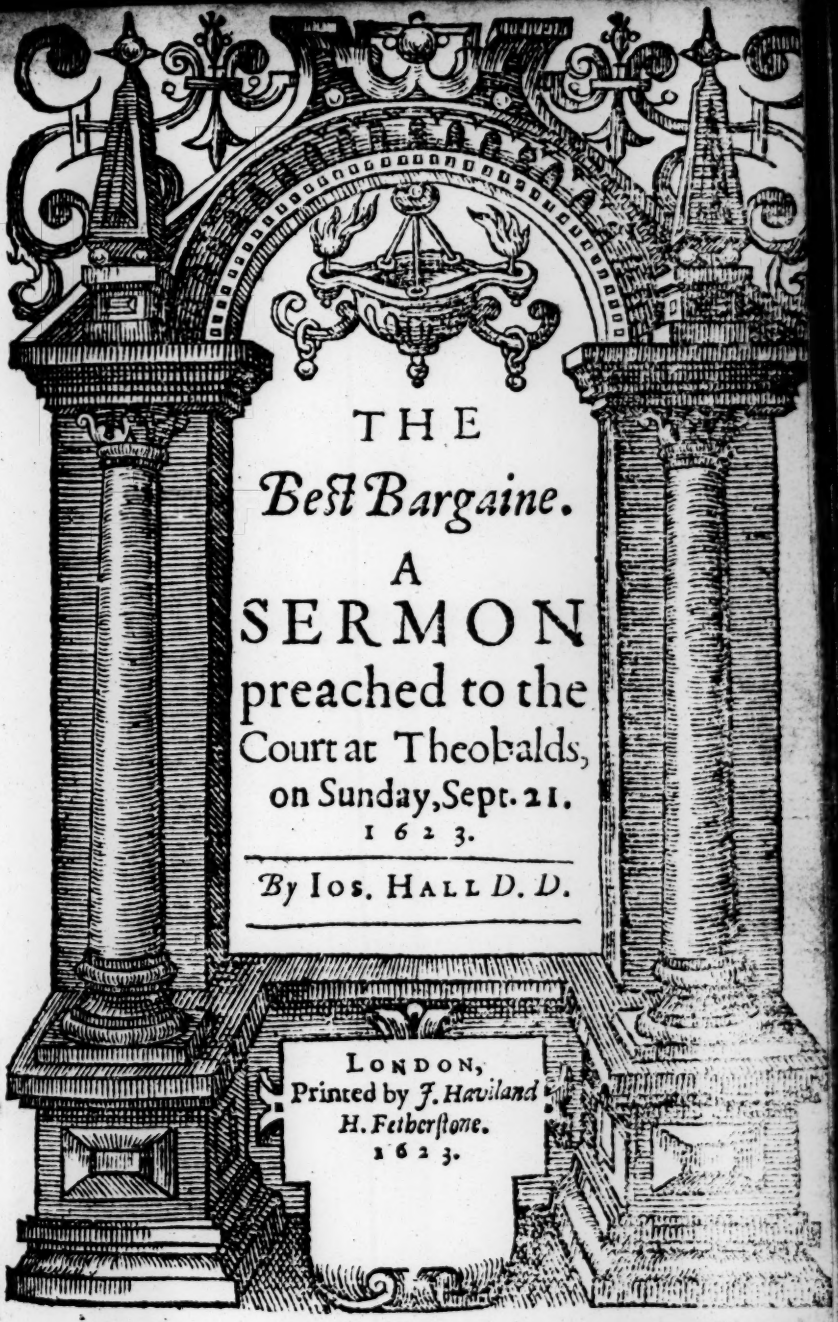

THE *Best Bargaine.*

A SERMON preached to the Court at Theobalds, on Sunday, Sept. 21. 1623.

By Ios. HALL *D. D.*

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1623.

TO THE RIGHT Honorable WILLIAM Earle of *Pembroke*, Lord High *Chamberlaine*; CHANCELLOVR of the Vniuersitie of *Oxford*; One of his MAIESTIES most Honorable Priuy Counsell.

RIGHT HONORABLE,

LEt it please you to receiue from the Presse what you vouchsafed to require from my pen: Vnworthy I confesse either of the publike light, or the beames of your

Honours iudicious eies; yet ſuch as (beſides the motiue of common importunity) I eaſily apprehended might be not a little vſefull for the times; which, if euer, require quickning: Neither is it to no purpoſe that the world ſhould ſee in what ſtile wee ſpeake to the Court, not without acceptation. This, and what euer ſeruice I may be capable of, are iuſtly deuoted to your Lordſhip, whom all good hearts follow with true Honour, as the great Patron of learning, the ſincere friend of Religion, and rich purchaſer of Truth. The God of Heauen adde to the number of ſuch Peeres, and to the meaſure of your Lo: graces and happineſſe.

Your Honors in all humble
and faithfull obſeruance,

IOS: HALL.

THE BEST Bargaine.

PROV. 23. 23.

Buy the Truth, and ſell it not.

THE ſubiect of my Text is a *Bargaine*, and *Sale*. A bargaine enioyned, a ſale forbidden: and the ſubiect of both bargaine and ſale, is *Truth*; A bargaine able to make vs all rich; a

ſale able to make any of vs miſera-
ble; *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not*; A
ſentence of ſhort ſound, but large
extent; the words are but ſeuen
ſyllables, an eaſie load for our me-
mories, the matter is a world of
worke; a long taske for our liues.
And firſt, let me call you to this
Mart, which holds both now, and
euer; If ye loue your ſelues be ye
cuſtomers at this ſhop of heauen;
Buy the Truth.

In euery bargaine there is *merx*,
and *mercatura*; the commoditie,
and the match; The commoditie
to bee bought is the Truth; the
match made for this commoditie,
is *Buying*, *Buy the Truth.* An ill
Iudge may put a good Interroga-
rie; yet it was a queſtion too good
for the mouth of a Pilate, *What is*
Truth?

Truth? The ſchooles haue wearied themſelues in the ſolution; To what purpoſe ſhould I reade a Metaphyſicall Lecture to Courtiers? Truth is as Time, one in all; yet, as Time, though but one, is diſtinguiſhed into paſt, preſent, future, and euery thing hath a Time of it owne; ſo is Truth variouſly diſtinguiſhed, according to the ſubiects wherein it is; This is *Anſelmes*, cited by *Aquinas*; I had rather ſay, Truth is as light: (*Send forth thy Truth, and thy light*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt) which (though but one in all) yet there is one light of the Sunne, another of the Moone, another of the Starres, another of this lower ayre: There is an eſſentiall, and cauſall Truth in the Diuine vnderſtanding, which the ſchooles call

Primo-

Primo-primam; This will not bee ſold, cannot be bought; God will not part with it, the world is not worth it; This Truth is as the Light in the body of the Sunne. There is an intrinſecall or formall truth in things truly exiſting; For, *Being* and *True* are conuertible; and Saint *Auſten* rightly defines *Verum eſt illud quod eſt*; All this created Truth in things, is deriued exemplarily, and cauſally, from that increated Truth of God; this the ſchooles call *Secundo-primam*; and it is as the light of the Sun-beames, caſt vpon the Moone, and Starres. There is an extrinſecall, or ſecondary truth of propoſitions following vpon, and conformable to the truth of the things expreſſed: thus, *Verum* is no other than *Eſſe declara-*

declaratiuum, as *Hilarie*; And this Truth, being in the thing it ſelfe ſubiectiuely, in words expreſſiuely, in the minde of man terminatiuely, preſuppoſeth a double conformitie or adequation; Both of the vnderſtanding to the matter conceiued; and of the words to the vnderſtanding; ſo as Truth is when we ſpeake as we thinke, and thinke as it is; And this Truth is as the light diffuſed from thoſe heauenly bodies, to the Region of this lower ayre; This is the Truth we are called to *Buy*: But this deriuatiue and relatiue Truth, whether in the minde, or in the mouth, hath much multiplicitie, according to the matter either conceiued, or vttered; There is a Theologicall Truth, there is a naturall, there

there is a morall, there is a ciuill; All theſe muſt bee deare bought; but the beſt at the higheſt rate, which is Theologicall, or diuine; whether in the principles, or neceſſary concluſions; The principles of diuine Truth are *Scriptura veritatis*, *Dan.* 10. The Law of Truth, *Mal.*2. The word of Truth, 2. *Cor.* 6. The neceſſary concluſions are they, which vpon irrefragable inferences are deduced from thoſe holy grounds: Shortly then, euery parcell of Diuine Truth, whether laid downe in Scripture, or drawne neceſſarily from Scripture, is this *Mercimonium ſacrum*, which wee are bidden to *Buy*; *Buy the Truth.*

This is the commoditie; The match is, *Buy*; that is, Beat the price,

price, and pay it. Buy it; Of whom? For what? Of whom, but of the owner, of the Maker?

The owner; It is *Veritas Domini*, Gods Truth, *Psal.* 117. His stile is, the *Lord God of Truth*, *Psal.* 31. The Maker; *The workes of his hand are truth, and iudgement*, *Psal.* 111. And if any vsurping spirit of error shall haue made a free-bootie of Truth, and shall with-hold it in vnrighteousnesse, we must redeeme it out of his hands with the highest ransome.

What is the price? That is the maine thing in buying; For, Buying is no other than *pactio pretij*: Else-where God proclaimes; *Hoe, euery one that thirsteth, come, buy wine and milke without money, and without price*, *Esa.* 55. This is a Donation, in

in forme of ſale: But, here muſt be a price in the hand; God will giue mercy, and not ſell it; He will ſell Truth, and not giue it: For what will he ſell it? Firſt, for Labour; The Heathen Poet could ſay, his gods ſold learning for ſweat; The originall word here vſed is (קְנֵה) *Compara; Get it any way*, either *labore*, or *precio*; yea *labore*, *vt precio*. This great foreman of Gods ſhop tells vs we cannot haue it, vnder. *Prou.* 2.4. We muſt ſeeke for her as ſiluer, and ſearch for her, as for hid Treaſures; The veine of Truth lies low, it muſt be digged, and delued for to the very center. If Truth could bee bought with eaſe and pleaſure, many a lazie Chriſtian would bid faire for it, who now reſolue rather vpon want, than toile.

toile. The ſlothfull worldling will rather take vp a falſhood for Truth, than beat his braine to diſcerne Truth from falſhood; an error of free-coſt is better than an high-rated Veritie; Labour for Truth is turn'd ouer for the taske of Church-men; no life ſauours to theſe flegmaticke Spirits, but that of the Lillies, *Neque laborant, neque nent*; They neither labour nor ſpin; This dull reſolution is vnworthy of a Chriſtian, yea of a reaſonable ſoule; and if we ſhould take vp no other for the body, we ſhould be fed with hunger, and cloathed with nakednesſe, the earth ſhould bee our fether-bed, and the sky our Canopy, wee ſhould abound with want, liue ſauagely, and die miſerably. It was

was the iuſt Canon of the Apoſtle, *He that labours not, let him not eat*; Certainly, he can neuer eat of the heauenly Manna of Truth, that will not ſtep forth to gather it: Heare this yee delicate Courtiers, that would heare a Sermon if yee could riſe out of your beds; that would lend God an houre, if yee could ſpare it from your pleaſures; the God of heauen ſcornes to haue his precious Truth ſo baſely vnderualued; if yee bid God leſſe than labour for Truth, I can giue you no comfort, but that yee may goe to hell with eaſe.

The markets of Truth as of all other commodities varie: It is the rule of Caſuiſts, *Iuſtitia pretij non conſiſtit in indiuiduo*; The Iuſtice of the Price doth not pitch euer

vpon

vpon a point; Sometimes the price of Truth hath riſen, it would not be bought but for danger, ſometimes, not vnder loſſe, not vnder diſgrace, not vnder impriſonment, not vnder exile, ſometimes yet dearer, not vnder paine, yea ſometimes it hath not gone for leſſe than bloud. It did coſt *Elias* danger, *Michaiah* diſgrace, *Ieremie* impriſonment, the Diſciples loſſe, *Iohn* and *Athanaſius* exile, the holy Confeſſors paine, the holy Martyrs death; Euen the higheſt of theſe is *pretium legitimum*, if God call for it, how euer nature may taxe it as rigorous, yea ſuch as the franke hearts of faithfull Chriſtians haue bidden at the firſt word for Truth; *What doe yee weeping, and breaking my heart; For I am ready not to be*

bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Ieſus, ſaith *S. Paul*, Act. 21. *Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he giue for his life*, ſaith Satan; but skin, & life, & all muſt a man giue for Truth, & not thinke it an hard penny-worth; *Neither count I my life deare vnto me that I may finiſh my courſe with ioy*, ſaith the choſen veſſell, to his Epheſians. Oh the heroicall ſpirits of our bleſſed fore-fathers, that ſtucke not to giue their deareſt heart-bloud for but ſome corollaries of ſacred Truth; whoſe burning zeale to Truth conſumed them before thoſe fires of Martyrdome, and ſent vp their pure and glorious ſoules, like *Manoahs* Angell, to heauen, in the flame. Bleſſed be God; Bleſſed be his Anointed,

Anointed, vnder whoſe gracious Scepter we haue inioyed dayes as much more happy than theirs, as their hearts were more feruent than ours: Wee may now buy Truth at a better hand; ſtake but our labour, wee carry it with thanks; I feare there want not thoſe that would be glad to marre the market; It can be only knowne to heauen what treacheries the malice of hell may be a brewing. Had but that powder once taken, nothing had beene abated of the higheſt price of our predeceſſors; We had paid for euery dram of Truth, as many ounces of bloud, as euer it coſt the frankeſt Martyr; ſhould the Deuill haue beene ſuffered to doe his worſt, we might not haue grud-

ged at this price of Truth, *Non eſt delicata in Deum, & ſecura confeſsio; qui in me credit, debet ſuum ſanguinem fundere*, ſaith *Ierome*. Chriſtian profeſſion is no ſecure or delicate matter, he that beleeues muſt be no niggard of his bloud. But why thus deare? Not without good reaſon: Monopolies vſe to enhaunce the price: Yee can buy Truth at no ſhop but one, *In cœlo præparata eſt Veritas tua*, Pſal. 89. 2. Thy truth is prepared in heauen. And it is a iuſt Rule of Law, *Quiſque in rebus ſuis eſt moderator, & arbiter*: Euery man may rate his owne: Neither is this only the ſole commoditie of God, but beſides, deare to the owner. *Dilexiſti veritatem*; Thou haſt loued Truth, ſaith the Pſalmiſt.

miſt. And it is a true rule in the Caſes of Commerce, *Affectus æſtimari poteſt*, Our loue may be valued in the price. Yea, O God, thy loue to Truth cannot be valued; It is thy ſelfe, Thou that art Truth it ſelfe haſt ſaid ſo, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; wee cannot therefore know how much thou loueſt thy Truth, becauſe as thy ſelfe is infinite, ſo is thy loue to thy ſelfe: What ſhould we hunt for compariſons? If all the earth were gold, what were it? when euen very heauen it ſelfe is traſh to thee in reſpect of Truth: No maruell if thou ſet it at an high rate; It is not more precious to thee, than beneficiall to vs. It frees vs, *Ioh.* 8. 32. It renues vs, *Iam.* 1. 18. It confirmes vs, *Prov.*

12.19. It ſanctifies vs, *Ioh.* 17.17. It defends vs, *Pſal.* 91.4. Shortly, it doth all for vs that God doth; for God works by his Almighty word, and his *word is Truth, Ioh.* 17. Therefore *buy the Truth.* And if Truth be thus precious, thus beneficiall; how comes it to paſſe that it is neglected, contemned? Some paſſe by it, and doe not ſo much as cheapen it; Others cheapen it, but bid nothing; Others bid ſomething, but vnder foot; Others bid well, but ſtake it not; Others laſtly ſtake downe, but reuoke it. The firſt that paſſe by and cheapen it not, are careleſſe vnbeleeuers; The next that cheapen it, and bid nothing, are formall Chriſtians; The third that bid ſomething but not enough, are

are worldly ſemi-Chriſtians; The fourth that bid well and ſtake it not, are glorious hypocrites; The laſt that ſtake downe and reuoke it, are damnable Apoſtats. Take all theſe out of the ſociety of men; and how many cuſtomers hath God that care to buy the Truth? If Truth were ſome rich chattell, it would be bought; If Truth were ſome goodly Lordſhip, or the reuerſion of ſome good Office, it would be bought; If Truth were ſome Benefice, or ſpirituall promotion (Oh time!) it would be bought; Yea, how deare are we content to pay for our filthy luſts; wee will needs purchaſe them (too oft) with ſhame, beggery, diſeaſe, damnation; Only the ſauing Truth of

God will not off hand. What is the reaſon of this? Firſt of all; It is but bare, ſimple, plaine, honeſt, homely Truth, without welt, without guard; It will abide none but natiue colours, it ſcorneth to wooe fauour with farding, and licking, and counterfaiſance; it hates either bought, or borrowed beauty; and therefore, like ſome natiue face among the painted, lookes courſe, and ruſty. There are two ſhops that get away all the cuſtome from Truth, The ſhop of Vanitie, the ſhop of Error; The one ſels knacks and gew-gawes, the other falſe wares, and adulterate; both of their commodities are ſo gilded, and gaudy, and glittering, that all fooles throng thither, and com-

plaine

plaine to want elbow-roome, and ſtriue who ſhall be firſt ſeru'd; whereas the ſecret worke of artleſſe, and vnpoliſht Truth can winne no eye to view it, no tongue to aske ſo much, as, *What will it coſt mee? Oh yee ſonnes of men, how long will yee loue vanitie, and ſeeke after lies?*

Secondly, though Truth in it ſelfe be alwaies excellent, yet the iſſue of it is not ſeldome diſtaſtfull; *Veritas odium:* There is one *Michaiah* whom I hate: *Am I become your enemie, becauſe I tell you the truth?* And this is the cauſe that Frier *Menot* alledges, why Truth in his Time was ſo vnwelcome to the Court. But if Truth be the mother of Hatred, ſhee is the daughter of Time, and

Truth

Truth hath learn't this of Time, to deuoure her owne brood, So that, in Time, Truth ſhall conſume hatred; and at the laſt, a galling Truth ſhall haue more thanks, than a ſmoothing ſupparitation. In the meane time, *Veritas nihil erubeſcit præterquam abſcondi*; Truth bluſheth at nothing but ſecrecie, as *Tertullian.*

How euer then fond, or falſe hearts value the Truth, let vs, that ſhould be wiſe Chriſtians, eſteeme it as the pearle hid in the field, which the man ſold all that euer he had to purchaſe. Would it not ſet any heart on fire with an holy anger, to ſee what the enemies of Truth bid, and giue for falſhood, for faction? Their libertie, their country, the life of their Soue-

Soueraigne, the eternall ſtate of their ſoules hath not ſeemed too deare to caſt away vpon an ill bargaine of miſ-religion; and ſhall not wee bid ſo much as our zealous well-wiſhes, our effectuall indeuours, our carefull obſeruances for the vndoubted Truth of our Maker and Redeemer? What ſhall I ſay to the miſerable and ſtupid careleſneſſe of theſe thriftleſſe and godleſſe times; wherein euery thing is appriſed, euery thing is bought, ſaue that which is moſt precious, moſt beneficiall, Truth. Yee great ones are made for precedents to the inferior world; your example is able to bring either good or euill into faſhion; For Gods ſake, for your ſoules ſake, what euer tranſactions ye make for

for the world, lay your plots for the bleſſed purchaſe of Truth; Oh let not your fickle honors, your vnſatisfying pleaſures, your worthleſſe profits, yea your momentanie liues ſeeme deare to you in compariſon of heauenly Truth. It is no ſhame in other parts for great Peeres to bee Merchants; *Mercatores tui erant principes*, ſaith the Angell concerning *Babylon*, *Reuel.* 18. *Thy Merchants were the Princes of the earth*; And why ſhould not yee great ones bee the Merchants of Truth? *Bleſſed bee the God of Truth, yee are ſo.* It is no proud word to ſay, That no Court vnder heauen hath ſo rich a ſtocke of Truth, as this of *Great Britaine*; yet let mee tell you, the very Angels knew not ſo much, but

but they desired to know more, *Ephes.* 3. 10. And if yee had already that vespertine knowledge of the Saints, which yee shall once haue in heauen, yet know that this bargaine stands not more in the iudgement, than in the affections: What euer our speculations may be, if our hearts be not set vpon Truth, we may be Brokers, wee are not Merchants; Brokers for others, not Merchants for our selues. As our Sauiour then, when hee bids vs sell all, forsake all, holds it done, when in preparation of minde wee are ready to abdicate all for his name, though we doe it not; so doth God hold vs to buy Truth, when wee bestow our best thoughts, our dearest well-wishes vpon it, though

we

we haue it alreadie. Oh ſtirre vp your languiſhing zeale, yee noble Courtiers, rouze vp your drouping loue to diuine Truth; Giue your hearts to it, yee cannot but giue all for it; And if yee doe not finde the ſweet gaine of this bargaine, in this lower Region of error, and confuſion, yee ſhall once finde it in thoſe eternall, and empireall habitations of Truth, where the God of Truth ſhall make vp the Truth of his promiſes, with the euerlaſting truth of his glorious performances; where Mercy and Truth ſhall ſo meet, and embrace one another, that both of them ſhall embrace the faithfull ſoule, for euer and euer.

This for the Bargaine of Truth; The forbidden ſale followeth;

ſell

ſell it not. Commonly what wee buy, we may ſell. *Alexander*, not the Great, but the Good, ſold Miters, Keyes, Altars; the verſe giues the reaſon; *Emerat ille prius*, Hee bought them. So Saint *Auſten* of *Simon Magus*, *Volebat emere ſpiritum Sanctum, quia vendere volebat ſpiritum Sanctum*; Hee would buy the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe he meant to ſell it. Giue me a man that buyes a Seat of Iudicature; I dare not truſt him for not ſelling of Iuſtice; he that ſits in the chaire of Symonie, will not giue Orders; will not sticke to ſell ſoules. Some things we may buy to ſell, as *Ioſeph* did the *Egyptian* corne; ſome things we muſt ſell, if we buy, as an *Iſraelites* Inheritance, *Leuit.* 25. But here we are charged to buy what it

it is a ſinne to ſell; *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not*; There is many a good thing ill ſold; *Eſau* ſels his birth-right for pottage; *Hanun* and *Shechem* ſell their Country for loue; *Dalilah* ſels her louer for a bribe; The Patriarchs ſell their Brother for twentie ſiluer rings; *Haman* ſels the *Iewes* for nought. The *Gentiles* ſell the Iewiſh girles for wine, *Ioel* 3. 3. *Iſrael* ſels the righteous for ſiluer, and the poore for ſhooes, *Amos* 2.6. Their Iudges ſell ſinnes or innocence for rewards, *Eſa.* 5. 23. *Ahab* ſels himſelfe to wickedneſſe; *Iudas* ſels his maſter; *Demas* ſels the Truth; All theſe make an ill market; And in all it is a ſure rule, the better the commoditie is, the more pernicious is the ſale. The indefiniteneſſe of the charge

charge implies a generalitie. Buy it at any price; At no price ſell it. It is the ſauour of God that it may be bought for any rate; It is the Iuſtice of God, that vpon any rate it ſhould not bee ſold: As buying and ſelling are oppoſites in relation; So that for which we muſt not ſell Truth is oppoſite to that for which we may buy it. Wee muſt buy it with labour, therefore wee may not ſell it for eaſe; If need be wee muſt buy it with loſſe, therefore we may not ſell it for gaine; we muſt buy it with diſgrace, we may not ſell it for honour; wee muſt buy it with exile or impriſonment, we may not ſell it for libertie; we muſt buy it with paine, we may not ſell it for pleaſure; We muſt buy it with death, we may

not ſell it for life; Not for any, not for all of theſe may we ſell Truth, this were *damnoſa mercatio*, as *Chryſoſtome*. In euery bargaine and ſale there muſt be a proportion; now eaſe, gaine, honour, libertie, pleaſure, life, yea worlds of all theſe are no way counteruaileable to Truth; *For what ſhall it profit a man to win the whole world, and leeſe his owne ſoule?* And hee cannot ſell Truth, but his ſoule is loſt: And if any thing in the world may ſeeme a due price of Truth, it is Peace. Oh ſweet and deare name of Peace, the good newes of Angels, the ioy of good men! who can but affect thee, who can but magnifie thee? The God of heauen before whom I ſtand, from whom I ſpeake, knowes how oft, how deeply

deeply I haue mourned for the diuiſions of his Church, how earneſtly I haue ſet my hand on work vpon ſuch poore thoughts of reunion; as my meanneſſe could reach; But when all is done, I ſtill found we may not offer to ſell Truth for Peace. It is true that there bee ſome Scholaſticall and immateriall Truths (the infinite ſubdiuiſions whereof haue rather troubled than informed Chriſtendome) which for the purchaſe of peace might be kept in, and returned into ſuch ſafe generalities as minds not vnreaſonable might reſt in; but ſold out they may not be; If ſome Truths may be contracted into a narrower roome, none may be contracted for; *Qui diuinis innutriti ſunt eloquijs*, as that Father

ſaid; Thoſe that are trained vp in diuine Truths may not change a ſyllable for a world. *Tene quod habes*, Hold that thou haſt, is a good rule in all things; which if in temporalties it were well obſerued, we ſhould not haue ſo many gallants ſquander away their inheritances to liue Cameleon-like vpon the ayre of fauour; But how euer this be too wel obſerued in theſe earthly things by frugall hands, which take as if they were quicke, hold as if they were dead, yet in ſpirituall graces it can neuer be obſerued enough; Wee get Truth, we buy it as *Iacob* did his birth-right, to keepe, to inioy, not to ſell againe: If therefore the world, if Satan ſhall offer to greaſe vs in the fiſt for Truth, let vs anſwer him as *Simon Peter*

Peter did *Simon* the Sorcerer, *Thy money periſh with thee, becauſe thou haſt thought the Truth of God may be purchaſed with money.*

What ſhall we ſay then to thoſe pedling petty-chapmen which we meet withall in euery market, that will be bartring away the Truth of God for trifles? Surely the forme of our ſpirituall market is contrarie to the ciuill; In our ciuill markets there are more buyers than ſellers; there would be but poore takings, if many did not buy of one; but in the ſpirituall, there are more Sellers of Truth, than Buyers.

Many a one ſels that hee neuer had, that he ſhould haue had, the Truth of God; Here one chops away the Truth for Feare or Ambition; There another lets it goe for

the old ſhooes of a *Gebeonitiſh* pretence of Antiquitie; Heere one parts with it for a painted, gilded hobby-horſe of an outwardly pompous magnificence of the Church; there another for the bables of childiſh ſuperſtition; One for the fancies of hope, another for the breath of a colloguing Impoſtor; Amongſt them all, *Diminutæ ſunt veritates à filijs hominum*, *Pſal.* 12. Truth is failed from the children of men: Yea as *Eſay* complained in his time, *Corruit in platea veritas*, *Eſa.* 59. 14. Truth is fallen in the ſtreets. What a ſhame it is to ſee, that in this cleere and glorious Sunne-ſhine of the Goſpell, vnder the pious gouernment of the True Defender of the Faith, there ſhould not want ſomeſoules that

that ſhould trucke for the Truth of God, as if it were ſome Cheapſide, or ſome Smithfield-Commoditie. *Commutauerunt veritatem Dei*; They haue changed the Truth of God into a lie, *Rom.* 1. 25. And all their care is, that they may be deceiued good cheap.

Whoſe heart cannot bleed to ſee ſo many well-rigg'd and hopefull Barkes of our young Gentry, laden with the moſt precious Merchandiſes of Nature and Grace, hall'd in euery day to theſe deceitfull Ports of Error, the owners partly cheated, partly robbed of Truth, deſpoiled of their rich fraight, and at laſt turn'd ouer-boord into a ſea of Deſperation. *Oh fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey, that yee ſhould not hold*

fast the Truth; Where shall I lay the fault of this mis-carriage? Mee thinkes I could aske the Disciples question, *Nunquid ego Domine*, Is it wee Lord? Are there of vs that preach our selues and not Christ? Are there that preach Christ, and liue him not? Woe to the world because of offences. It must needs be that offences should come, but woe to the man by whom the offence commeth: God forbid that we should be so bad that the seuen-hils should not iustifie vs; But what euer we be, the Truth is still, and euer it selfe, neither the better for our innocence, nor worse for our guilt. If men bee faultie, what hath Truth offended? Except the sacred word of the euer-liuing God can mis-guide you,

you, we haue ſet you right. We are but Duſt and Aſhes, yet, O God, giue vs thine humble vaſſals leaue in an awfull confidence ſo farre to conteſt with thee, the Lord of heauen and earth, as to ſay, *If we be deceiued, thou haſt deceiued vs.* It is thou that haſt ſpoken by vs to thy people; Let God bee True, and euery man a Lier; Whither ſhould we goe from thee, thou haſt the words of eternall life. Deare Chriſtians, our fore-fathers tranſmitted to vs the intire inheritance of the glorious Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, repurchaſed by the bloud of their martyrdome; Oh let not our ill husbandry impaire it; Let not poſteritie once ſay, they might haue bin happy, but for the vnthriftines of vs their progenitors;

Let

Let it not bee ſaid, that the coldneſſe of vs the teachers, and profeſſors of Truth hath dealt with Religion as *Rehoboam* did with his ſhields, which hee found of Gold, but left of Braſſe. If Truth had no friends, we ſhould plead for it, but now that we haue before our eies ſo powerfull an ὑπερασπιστὴς of Chriſtian faith, that with his very pen hath ſo laid error vpon the backe, that all the world cannot raiſe it, what a ſhame were it to be wanting to him, to Truth, to our ſelues?

But perhaps now, I know ſome of your thoughts; you would buy Truth (ye thinke) you would hold it, if yee could be ſure to know it; There are many ſlips amongſt the true coyne; Either of the mothers pleaded

pleaded the liuing childe to be hers, with equall proteſtations, oathes, teares. True; Yet a *Salomons* ſword can diuide Truth from falſhood; and there is a teſt, and fire that can diſcerne true metals from adulterate; In ſpight of all counterfeiting there are certaine infallible marks, to know Truth from Error; Take but a few of many; whether in the originals, in the natures, in the ends of both. In the firſt, Truth is diuine, Error is humane; what is grounded vpon the diuine word muſt needs be irrefragably true; that which vpon humane Traditions, either muſt, or may be erroneous. In the ſecond, Truth is one, conforme euer to it ſelfe, Ἀνδρὸς ξυνῳδὸν, as one ſaid; *Omne verum*

verum omni vero conſonat, All truth accords with euery Truth, as *Gerſon*; and as it is pure, ſo peaceable; Error is full of diſſonance, of cruelty: No particulars of ours diſſent from the written verity of God; We teach no man to equiuocate; Our practiſe is not bloudy with treaſons, and maſſacres. In the third, Truth, as it came from God, ſo is referd to him; neither hath any other end, than the glory of the God of Truth; Error hath euer ſome ſelf-reſpects; either αἰσχροκερδίαν, or κενοδοξίαν, filthy lucre or vaine-glory; profit, or pride; We doe not prancke vp nature; we ayme not, either to fill the cofers, or feed the ambition of men; Let your Wiſdomes apply and inferre, and now (if yee can) ſhut your eyes, that

that you ſhould not ſee the Truth; and, if yee care not for your ſoules, when yee ſee it, ſell it: Let no falſe tongue perſwade you there is no danger in this ſale: How charitably ſo euer wee thinke of poore blinded ſoules, that liue in the forced, and inuincible darkneſſe of error, certainly Apoſtaſie is deadly; How euer thoſe ſpeed that are robbed of Truth, you cannot ſell Truth, and be ſaued. Haue mercy therefore on your owne ſoules, for their ſakes, for the ſake of him that bought them, with the deare ranſome of his precious bloud; And as God hath bleſſed you with the inualuable treaſure of Truth, ſo hoard it vp in your hearts, and menage it in your liues; Oh let vs be *Gens iuſta cuſtodiens veritatẽ*, Eſ. 26.

A iuſt nation keeping faſt the Truth; So whiles yee keepe the Truth, the Truth ſhall keepe you, both in Life, in Death, in Iudgement; In life vnto death, in death and iudgement vnto the conſummation of that endleſſe and incomprehenſible glory which the God of Truth hath prepared for them that ouercome.

To the happy poſſeſſion whereof he that hath ordained, in his good time as mercifully bring vs; and that for the ſake of the Sonne of his Loue, IESVS CHRIST the Righteous; To whom with thee O Father, & thy bleſſed Spirit, one infinite God, be giuen all praiſe, honour, and glory, now and for euer.

Amen.